



State of New Jersey

Department of Environmental Protection

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HPO-H2002-54  
September 6, 2002  
Log # 02-2691

Ms. Pamela Garrett  
Environmental Team Leader  
Division of Project Management  
New Jersey Department of Transportation  
1035 Parkway Avenue  
Post Office Box 600  
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0600

Dear Ms. Garrett:

As Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer for New Jersey, in accordance with 36 CFR Part 800: Protection of Historic Properties, as published in the *Federal Register* on December 12, 2000 (65 FR 77725-77739), I am providing Initial Consultation Comments for the following proposed undertaking:

**US Route 1 (Section 6 V) over CONRAIL Sayreville Secondary  
(formerly Raritan River Railroad)**

**Removal of Bridge and Railroad Right of Way  
North Brunswick Township, Middlesex County.**

This letter is in response to your submission of documents initiating consultation in accordance with 36 CFR Parts 800.3 and 800.4.

The proposed project, the removal of the US Route 1 Bridge over the current CONRAIL Sayreville Secondary (former Raritan River Railroad) will require the formal abandonment of this railroad right of way for a distance of approximately 1 mile to the west of Route 1 and may involve the abandonment of an as yet to be determined segment of the railroad east of Route 1. The abandonment of the railroad and the removal of railroad track and structures will involve a public filing by the railroad before the federal Surface Transportation Board (STB). The STB review and evaluation of an abandonment petition is a federal action that requires an assessment of effects to historic properties pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). HPO staff has provided your staff with additional information on the railroad abandonment process and federal agency review of abandonment petitions.

I can concur with the proposed Area of Potential Effects (APE) only with the inclusion of the railroad right of way and associated buildings and structures (including facilities served by the railroad). This APE will be identical to the APE of the cultural resources evaluation required

by the STB. An overall history of the railroad, as well as an inventory of railroad and railroad related resources that may be affected by any abandonment, must be part of the cultural resources evaluation for this proposed undertaking.

I concur that the North Brunswick Historical Society, New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, and Middlesex County Cultural and Heritage Commission are three organizations with a potential interest in and a knowledge of historic properties within the APE. A number of Internet based railroad history groups and forums may also have information on or an interest in the Raritan River Railroad.

Although your submission does not identify consulting parties, I suggest that the New Jersey Department of Transportation, Historic Preservation Office, Middlesex County, and Township of North Brunswick are the appropriate public agency consulting parties for the initiation of consultation. As the owner of the railroad right of way and the entity responsible for initiating abandonment proceedings before the Surface Transportation Board, CONRAIL/CSX must also be an active consulting party for the NJDOT project. Public involvement activities may identify additional consulting parties.

I would appreciate knowing, as per 36 CFR Part 800.3, the public involvement plan for this proposed project. The public involvement plan should identify both the process of gathering information on historic properties from the public and the specific opportunities for the public and consulting parties to participate in the consultation process. The cultural resources report should acknowledge, in accordance with a public involvement plan, the comments and/or information provided by consulting parties and individuals and organizations with a knowledge of or an interest in historic properties within the project APE. The documentation of public participation in the evaluation of historic resources and project effects will substantially enhance the quality and timeliness of the Section 106 consultation.

Should you need any further assistance in identifying or evaluating potential historic resources or if you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact Charles Scott at (609) 633-2396 or Steve Hardegen at (609) 984-0141.

Sincerely,



Dorothy P. Guzzo  
Deputy State Historic  
Preservation Officer

C: Jack McQuillan, NJDOT  
Environmental Coordinator, FHWA  
Area Engineer, FHWA  
Surface Transportation Board, Environmental Analysis Section  
Consulting / Interested Parties

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